

IN THE CLAIMS:

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B1 1. (Currently amended) A dummy bar for a continuous casting plant for preliminary steel sections having an I-shape or H-shape, the dummy bar comprising

a one-piece head piece having dimensions corresponding to dimensions of a mold cross-section,

two rows of segments connected to the head piece, wherein the two rows extend parallel to each other in a longitudinal direction of the dummy bar and are spaced apart from each other by a width of the dummy bar, further comprising

continuous flexible spring steel bands mounted on each row of segments for connecting the segments, wherein each flexible spring steel band is located on an inner side of a curved portion of the dummy bar and on an outer side of the row of segments.

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2. (Deleted)

3. (Original) The dummy bar according to claim 1, wherein the head piece has at least one recess extending transversely of the longitudinal direction of the dummy bar for connecting the dummy bar to a hot strand.

4. (Original) The dummy bar according to claim 1, further comprising cross-connecting elements arranged between the two rows of segments and spaced apart from each other in the longitudinal direction, wherein each cross-connecting member is attached to two oppositely located segments of the two rows.

5. (Original) The dummy bar according to claim 1, wherein the segments following the head piece in the longitudinal direction are transition segments having a reduced thickness.

6. (Original) The dummy bar according to claim 1, wherein the segments of each row are connected to each other in an articulated pivotable manner by means of key and slot connections.

7. (Original) The dummy bar according to claim 1, wherein the segments are bevelled so as to downwardly recede at oppositely located surfaces of the two rows of segments.

8. (Original) The dummy bar according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the head pieces and the individual segments have inner hollow spaces for weight reduction.

11 9. (Original) The dummy bar according to claim 2, wherein each spring steel band is screwed or riveted to the row of segments.

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B2 10. (Amended) The dummy bar according to claim [2] 1, wherein the two rows of segments with spring steel strips mounted thereon are spaced apart from each other in accordance with a width of a H-shaped profile of a hot strand.

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